Accounts of the taluk boards of Anantapur, etc.

* 342 Q.—Mr. A. RANGANATHA MUDALIYAR: Will the hon. the Minister for Local Self-Government be pleased to state the action the Government propose to take in regard to all or any of the taluk boards of Anantapur, Dharmapuram, Penukonda, whose general accounts closed with a deficit last year?

A.—According to the budgets for 1924–25, it was expected that the Anantapur, Penukonda and Dharmavaram taluk boards would have deficits of Rs. 2,664, Rs. 9,073 and Rs. 7,620 respectively at the end of that year. The Government sanctioned compassionate grants equivalent to the deficits to the first two boards to enable them to wipe off their deficits. The Dharmavaram Taluk Board was requested to levy the optional land-cess in order to avoid the deficit. It is not known if in spite of the above grants the Anantapur and Penukonda taluk boards had deficits on 31st March 1925. The Government have not yet received the accounts of the boards for 1925–26 and have called for them.

The budget of the Anantapur Taluk Board for 1925–26 has been received. The budgets of the other two taluk boards have not been received. The Government will consider the question of giving compassionate grants, if necessity arises, to such boards as are expected to have deficits at the end of the current year.

Mr. A. RANGANATHA MUDALIYAR :—" Is it the policy of the Government to pay off the deficits of taluk boards if they are not able to balance their budgets normally."

The hon. the RAJA OF PANAGAL :—" If the taluk boards concerned deserve paying off their deficits, if they show that there is an absolute necessity for them to receive the help of the Government and that they have done all that is possible under the Act to make their financial position sound, then the Government may consider their cases."

Mr. A. RANGANATHA MUDALIYAR :—" May I know whether such an opportunity was given to the boards that have been abolished to explain their position?"

The hon. the RAJA OF PANAGAL :—" I said that only in cases where it was absolutely necessary the Government would consider."

Medical.

Management of the Leper Asylum, Chingleput.

* 343 Q.—Rao Bahadur CRUZ FERNANDEZ: Will the hon. the Minister for Local Self-Government be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether it is a fact that negotiations were concluded between the Mother Provincial of the Franciscan Sisters and the Government of Madras to entrust the management and care of the Leper Asylum at Chingleput to the sisters of that order;

(*b*) whether it is a fact that Government have changed their policy all of a sudden and entered into correspondence with the authorities of the All-England Leper Mission to take over the management of the asylum, and if so, what are the circumstances that led to such a sudden change of

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policy in spite of the previous negotiations with the Franciscan Sisters and in spite of the undertaking of the Mother Provincial to take over the management of the asylum in addition to the care and nursing of the lepers ;

(c) whether it is a fact that, as a result of their change of policy, Government have handed over or have arranged to hand over the management and care of the asylum to the Rev. and Mrs. Southerland of Chingleput and if so, the reason which induced Government to give up the original proposal to entrust the same to the Franciscan Sisters ;

(d) whether it is a fact that under the new arrangement there would be an additional outlay of about two lakhs of rupees on the construction of dwellings for the new staff and that the cost of maintenance of the new staff would be about four times higher than that according to the original proposal to hand over the management to the Franciscan Sisters ;

(e) whether Government have carefully considered the financial aspect of the new proposals from an economic point of view in consideration of the large outlay of tax-payers' money required to be invested on the new scheme of working the institution ;

(f) whether Government would give the Members of the Council an opportunity to closely examine the new as well as the previous arrangements to run the institution solely in the interests of economy and efficiency ; and

(g) whether Government would be pleased to lay on the table of the Council all papers relating to the original and new proposals to entrust the management of the asylum to the missionary workers ?

A.—(a) & (b) The hon. Member is referred to the answer given to question No. 649 on 24th March 1925.

(c) In paragraph 5 of the annexure to the answer to question No. 649, dated 24th March 1925, the Government have already stated the reason for handing over the settlement to the United Free Church of Scotland Mission and they have only to add that the settlement has since been handed over to that mission.

(d) It is not possible to institute a true comparison between the two proposals ; the one was confined to nursing arrangements and minor duties, while the other relates to the entire administration of the settlement.

(e) Yes.

(f) As already pointed out, the two proposals are different from each other. The Government do not consider that any useful purpose will be served by an examination of the two proposals as suggested.

(g) A précis of the negotiations with the Franciscan Sisters has already been laid on the table on 24th March 1925 in answer to question No. 649. The conditions on which the management of the settlement has been handed over to the United Free Church of Scotland Mission are stated in G.O. No. 892, P.H., dated 27th April 1925, which is now laid on the table. [a]

[a] Printed as Appendix II on pages 638-640 infra.